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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (08/25): Prime Minister lays out a plan for achieving an independent state

Main Stories:

Al-Quds and Al-Hayat Al-Jadida lead with news on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's meeting with US Special Envoy George Mitchell in London scheduled for August 26. While reports quote US State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly stating that the US hopes to see the Palestinians and Israelis resume peace talks as soon as possible, Israeli officials are reportedly skeptical that the meeting will achieve major progress in bridging the gaps between the US and Israel concerning settlement activity. Palestinian Authority (PA) Presidency spokesperson Nabil Abu Rudeinah is quoted in Al-Hayat Al-Jadida as saying that "anything that doesn't comply with road map obligations or President Obama's demands will not lead to renewed peace talks." The dailies also report on an expected trilateral meeting between Netanyahu, PA President Mahmoud Abbas and President Barack Obama in early September in New York.

All dailies report that PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad will hold a press conference today to announce his plan for building Palestinian institutions and establishing an independent Palestinian state in two years. Fayyad is quoted in Al-Ayyam as saying "the Palestinians must not wait for a peace settlement with Israel. They must move forward and build their state."

Al-Quds front pages news on the Chairman of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) Salim Al-Zaanoun noting on August 24 that an extraordinary session of the PNC will be held in Ramallah on August 26 in order to complete the membership of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

Al-Hayat Al-Jadida runs front page news on the PA Ministry of

Education condemning Hamas for imposing a special uniform on school girls in Gaza. PA Deputy Minister of Education Mohammad Abu Zaid is reported as saying that this policy is against the right to an education and other universal human rights. Abu Zaid urged Hamas not to bring the schools and educational institutions into the political conflict. Al-Ayyam reports that the Hamas government in Gaza expressed its anger at the media for highlighting these new measures and noted that it will pursue this policy notwithstanding any criticism. -----

BLOCK QUOTES:

1) Wadi Abu Nassar opines in Al-Quds independent daily under the title, "Will there be a settlement construction freeze?" (08/25): "Most likely the freezing of settlements in the West Bank and Jerusalem will not be complete. Without a courageous Israeli leadership, strong pressure on the Israeli government, and without ending the occupation, the settlements in the West Bank will not stop."

2) Hafeth Al-Barghouti opines in Al-Hayat Al-Jadida official daily under the title "Hamas and the dialogue" (08/25): "Since the beginning of the first round of the national unity dialogue, Hamas has not changed its position, and it imposed new demands and conditions at every round of talks that are totally irrelevant to the dialogue ... It is clear that Hamas is not interested in achieving any tangible results from this dialogue. It only wants to gain time and avoid elections."

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